DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 426 332 CG 029 017

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TITLE Cross-Cultural Group Counseling with Asians: A Stage-Specific Interactive Model.
PUB DATE 1999-01-00
NOTE 29p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Asian Americans; Counseling; Counseling Techniques; *Counselor Client Relationship; *Cross Cultural Training; Cultural Interrelationships; Cultural Pluralism; *Cultural Relevance; *Ethnicity; *Group Counseling; Group Dynamics; Individual Development; Models

ABSTRACT

A model for offering culturally and developmentally responsive interventions in cross-cultural groups with Asian members is provided. The "stage-specific interactive model" is based on four factors: (1) the stage of Asian clients' ethnic identity development; (2) the stage of White leaders' ethnic identity development; (3) the unique interacting patterns between the two, and (4) the stages of the group process. Ethnic identity development is distinguished from acculturation, and a "revised" model of Asian identity development is proposed. Models for discerning a White counselor's racial identity development are reviewed and a "revised" model is presented. The new "stage-specific interactive model" makes use of "style shift counseling" to promote growth while meeting clients' developmental needs. Beginning with the "forming stage" of group development, the implications of the new model are discussed. The model addresses potential problems and interventions in each specific group stage for parallel, progressive, regressive, or crossed interaction modes between White group leaders and Asian members. Special attention is paid to the differences in culture-bound values, culturally encapsulated attitudes and beliefs, verbal and nonverbal communication styles, and the nature of interpersonal dynamics. (EMK)

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RUNNING HEAD: Group Counseling with Asians

ED 426 332

Cross-Cultural Group Counseling with Asians: A Stage-Specific Interactive Model

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Abstract

This article provides a model for offering culturally responsive interventions in cross-cultural groups with Asian members. The theoretical foundation is based on a developmental paradigm focusing on four compounding factors, i.e., the Revised Ethnic Identity Development of the Asian member, the Revised White Racial Identity Development of the leader; the interacting patterns between the two, and the stage of group life. The model addresses potential problems and interventions in each specific group stage for parallel, progressive, regressive, or crossed interaction modes between White group leaders and Asian members. Special attention is paid to the differences in culture-bound values, culturally encapsulated attitudes and beliefs, verbal/nonverbal communication styles, and the nature of interpersonal dynamics.

Cross-Cultural Group Counseling with Asians

Stage-Specific Interactive Model

The need for cultural sensitivity in working with minority clients resonates throughout the counseling field. To address this need, counselors are increasingly taking cultural influences into consideration when working with ethnic minorities. Despite this improvement, research in cross-cultural counseling remains sparse (Sue, 1994). In the few studies done, primarily with African Americans, Hispanics or American Indians, least attention is paid to Asian clients (Phinney, 1990). Comprising 34% of the current immigration wave in the U.S., Asians have not been as readily assimilated into American society as have European immigrants (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1993). The consequential wide intragroup differences render it difficult for mental health professionals to work effectively with Asians' unique issues (Sue, 1994; Yu & Gregg, 1993).

Within the group counseling domain, this difficulty prevails. Since ethnically matched group counseling is rare due to the scant number of trained Asian group leaders, Asian clients frequently find themselves in a mixed group led by a White leader. When facing Asian clients, group workers usually apply common group interventions, such as encouraging verbal expression of feelings, using confrontation for conflict resolution, and emphasizing individuation and differentiation (Atkinson et al., 1993; Greeley, Garcia, Kessler, & Gilchrest, 1992; Leong, 1992). Further, the effect of interaction between a therapist's and a client's ethnic/racial identity development compounds matters. Failing to offer culturally and developmentally responsive interventions, group workers may find themselves jolted by Asians' premature termination or the lack of effectiveness in group setting (Atkinson et al., 1993; Greeley et al., 1992; Leong, 1992).

To offer culturally and developmentally responsive interventions, it is crucial to consider Asian clients' and group leaders' racial identity development level (Fukuyama & Coleman, 1992; Leong, 1992; Leong, Wagner, & Kim, 1995). This article aims to present a stage-specific interactive model for group counseling with Asian clients, providing interventions that promote an Asian client's sense of self when integrated into the Western culture (Brinson & Lee, 1996; Chen, 1995). We hope that this stage-specific interactive model enhances group leaders' awareness and effectiveness in working with Asian clients throughout the group stages.

The Four Interactive Factors

The Stage-Specific Interactive Model for cross-cultural group with Asians is based on the following factors: (a) the stage of Asian clients' ethnic identity development; (b) the stage of White leaders' racial identity development; (c) the unique interacting patterns formed by variables (a) and (b); and (d) the group stages. While guided by contributing literature, we went one step further to re-formulate existing disparate concepts into a coherent map, navigating the stage-specific intervention.

Revised Ethnic Identity Development for Asians

The first factor, Asians' ethnic/cultural identity development, affects all aspects of therapeutic outcome (Fukuyama & Coleman, 1992; Leong, 1992; Leong et al., 1995). It serves as a frame of reference, determining how an Asian perceives situations and people (Smith, 1991). Ethnic identity development, a lifelong process of differentiating and integrating ethnic experiences, differs in rates and modes based on an Asian's selective interracial experiences (Smith, 1991), usually moving toward a higher order of self-identification with increased cross-cultural contacts. Ethnic identity development differs from acculturation (Kohatsu, Suzuki, &

Bennett, 1991; Phinney, 1990; Sodowsky, Kwan, & Pannu, 1995). In acculturation, an Asian incorporates into him/herself the values or ideology of *the dominant culture* in order to survive and belong (Phinney, 1990; Smith, 1991). In ethnic identity development, however, an Asian, attaches or rejects *his/her own culture* into his/her self identity (Phinney, 1990; Sodowsky et al., 1995).

There exists several models appropriate for describing Asians' ethnic identity development: The Minority Identity Development model (Atkinson et al., 1993; Sue & Sue, 1990), the People of Color Racial Identity (Helms, 1995), the Ethnic Identity Development model (Phinney, 1990), and Leong and Chou's model (1994) integrating ethnic identity development and the acculturation process. Differences among these existing models often create confusion. For the purpose of our interactive model, we revise these disparate models into a single one with five stages as presented in figure 1.

An Asian's ethnic identity development begins with the *Precontact* stage where he/she lacks exploration of ethnic identity issues, having little contact with members from the dominant group. With increased interracial experiences, especially negative ones like encountering racism, his/her ego syntonic state is challenged, leading him/her to enter the second stage -- *Dissonance*. In this stage the self identity is filled with conflict and confusion. Unsettled and entangled feelings are aroused in dealing with previously naive beliefs concerning racial issues.

Efforts to transcend the dissonant state lead an Asian into one of three alternatives in the third stage: (a) *Immersion*, submerging to the Asian group's own cultural values; (b) *Conformity*, complying to the dominant cultural values; or *Marginality*, segregating oneself from both the Asian and the majority cultural values. With increased interracial contact experiences, those in

Revised Ethnic Identity Development Mode

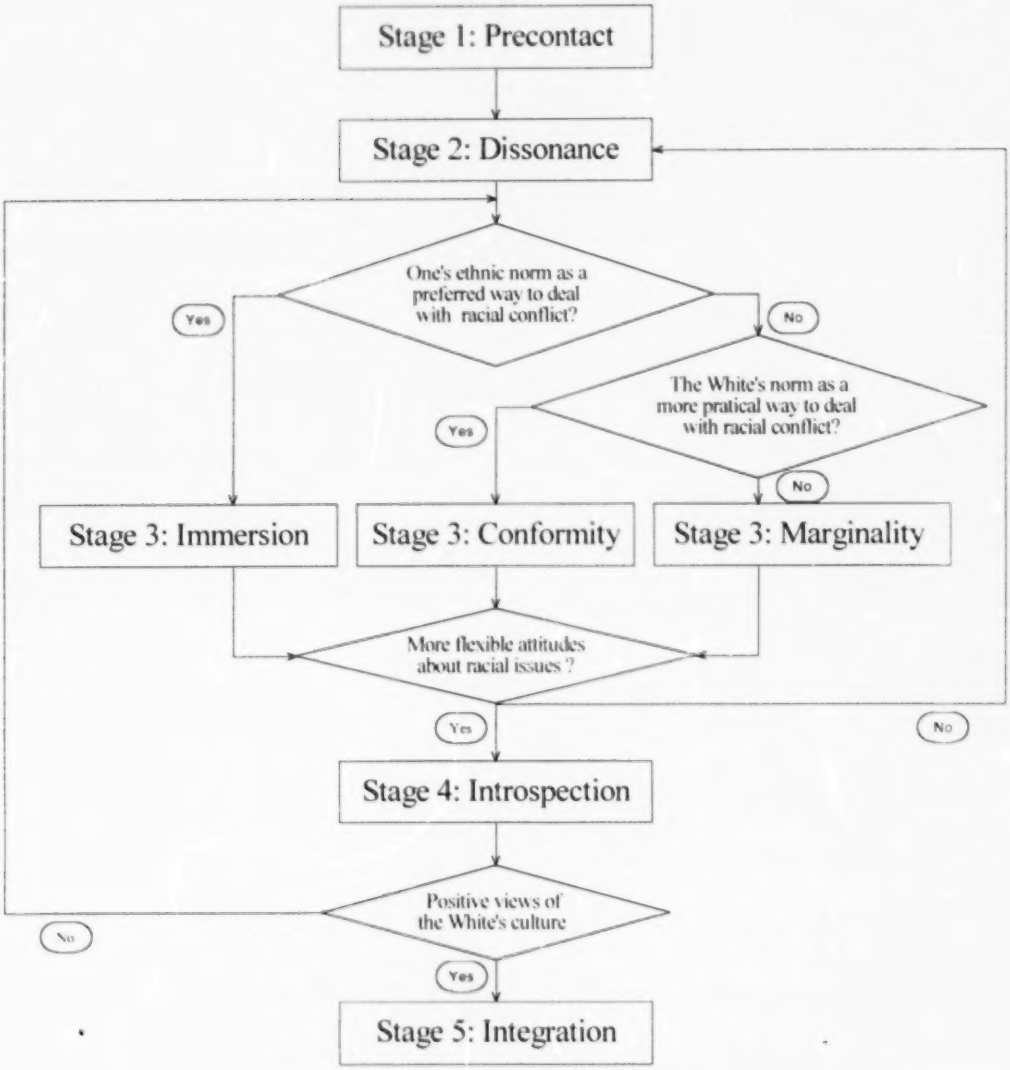

Figure 1: Flowchart of the Revised Ethnic Identity Development Model

NOTE: Stage 1 = Lack of awareness of oneself as a member of a race. Stage 2 = Increased interracial contacts leading to conflict and confusion. Stage 3 = Taking one of three stances to reduce the former dissonant state. Stage 4 = Having more flexible attitudes of self and others as racial being on further interaction with members of the dominant culture. Stage 5 = Integration of inner sense of security as to one's own ethnicity and a positive view of the White ethnic group.

the Immersion position may start to feel disturbed by his/her dichotomous attitude regarding interracial issues; those in the Conformity position may start to question adherence to the dominant culture; and those in the Marginality position may feel unsatisfied by being caught between two cultures. When the disequilibrium reaches an apex, Asians in these Immersion/Conformity/Marginality stages are likely to evolve into the fourth stage -- *Introspection* -- where inner self conflicts are reflected upon. Through reflection, Asians begin to reconcile their own ethnic values with those of the dominant culture. With resolution of inner conflicts, the Asian is now more likely to have the flexibility necessary to move to the fifth stage -- *Integration*. He/she can acquire an inner sense of security about his/her own ethnic identity and a positive view of the dominant group.

Revised White Racial Identity Development

The second factor in the interactive model is the group leader's racial identity development. Most research on identity development focuses on ethnic/cultural minorities; fewer focus on White counselors (Sabnani, Ponterotto, & Borodovsky, 1991). Inevitably, a counselor's racial attitude affects the counseling relationship, the intervention style, and the counseling outcome (Carter & Helms, 1992; Chen, 1995; Greeley et al., 1992; Leong, 1992; Sabnani et al., 1991). In current multicultural training and practice, it is still believed that any White middle-class counselor can employ cross-cultural counseling skills without examining his/her stage of development in assimilation of multiculturalism (Sabnani et al., 1991). Like many researchers (Ottavi, Pope-Davis, & Dings, 1994; Reyes & Celano, 1993), however, we believe that to develop competence, comfort, and therapeutic effectiveness in working with ethnic minorities, a White group leader needs to examine his/her own racial identity

development.

Several models are available for discerning a White counselor's racial identity development. Among them are the White Racial Identity Development model by Helms (Carter, 1990b; Helms, 1990; Helms, 1995); the White Racial Consciousness Development model by Sabnani et al. (1991); the Racial Consciousness Development model by Ponterotto (1988); and the Racial/Cultural Identity model by Sue and Sue (1990). Though all of these models agree that the identity of a White person usually begins with a lack of racial sensitivity and moves toward a growing internalized positive White identity, many discrepancies exist. To render a White counselor's racial identity development congruent with the revised five-stage Asian ethnic identity development, we recast the above models into one containing five developmental stages: Preexposure; Disintegration; ProWhite/ProMinority; Redefinition; and Autonomy (see figure 2).

A White person in first stage -- *Preexposure* -- usually lacks awareness about the self as a racial being, having few encounters with ethnic minority members. Through increased interracial contacts, however, he/she arrives at the second stage -- *Disintegration* -- where disorienting inner conflict prevails after the realization that his/her own racial group oppresses minority groups. To deal with this inner conflict, the White person next adopts one of the following alternative attitudes in the third stage: (a) *ProWhite*, displacing sense of guilt with stereotypical thinking of White superiority and projecting anger toward non-Whites; or (b) *ProMinority*, overidentifying with ethnic minority groups and taking paternalistic attitudes toward non-Whites. Increased interracial contacts may move him/her away from the present level. If an individual begins to reconstruct his/her racial identity at the intellectual level, intensively replacing racial myths and stereotypes, he/she then moves into the fourth stage -- *Redefinition*. The successful completion

Revised White Racial Identity Development Model

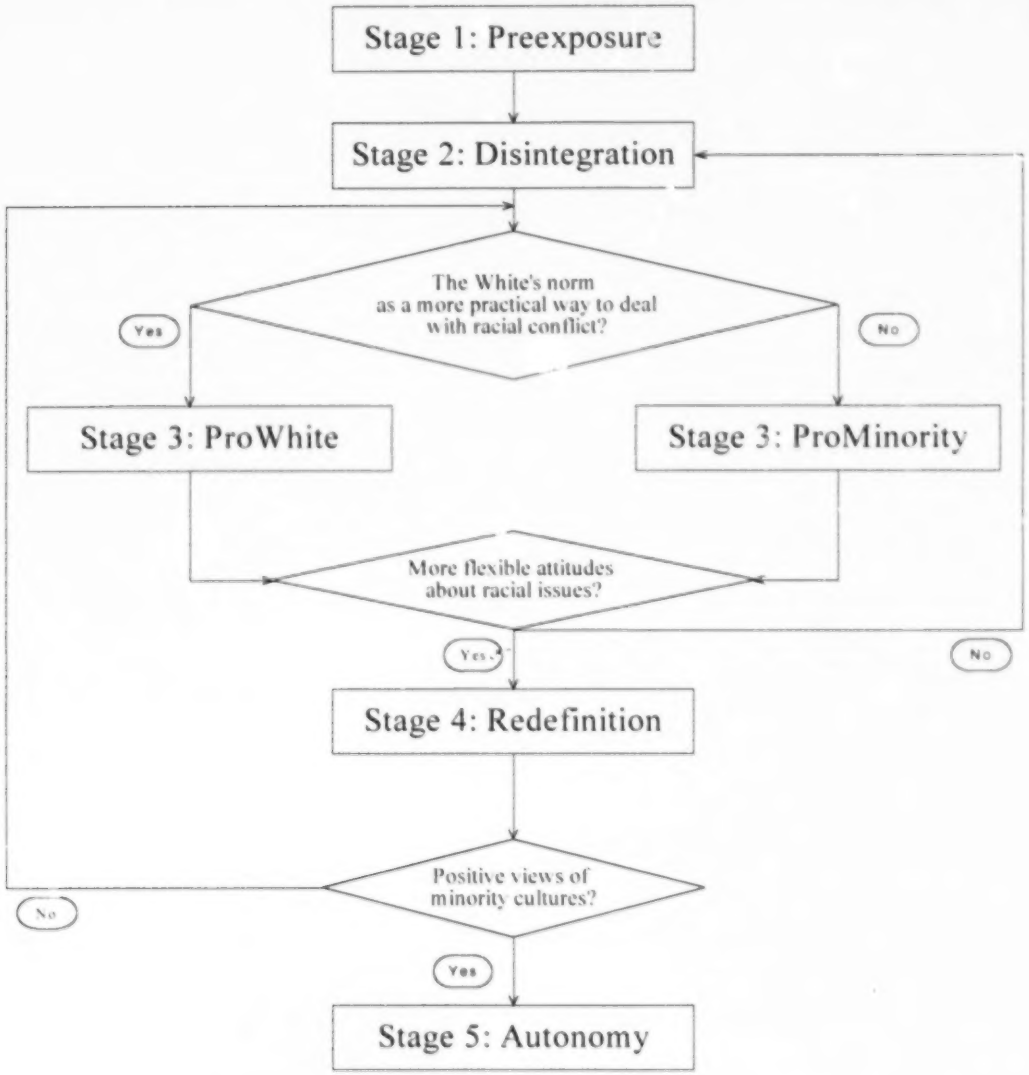

Figure 2: Flowchart of the Revised White Racial Identity Development Model

NOTE: Stage 1= Lack of awareness of oneself as a member of the White race. Stage 2 = Increased interracial contacts leading to disorienting inner conflict. Stage 3 = Taking one of the two stances to reduce the former conflicting state. Stage 4 = Having more flexible attitudes of self and others as racial beings with further interaction with members of other cultures. Stage 5 =Autonomy with an internalized sense of security regarding one's own racial identity and a positive view of ethnic minority groups.

of the developmental tasks in the Redefinition stage then allows the White individual to advance to the fifth stage -- *Autonomy* -- where an internalized sense of security regarding his/her own racial identity and a positive view of other ethnic groups emerges.

Interaction Patterns Specified

When White leaders interact with Asian clients, various qualitatively different patterns can occur hinging on ethnic/racial identity developmental stages of both. Helm addressed four types of interaction patterns between the White and the Black: Parallel, regressive, progressive, or crossed relationship (Carter & Helms, 1992; Helms, 1990). Applying Helm's interaction patterns to our revised ethnic/racial identity development for the White leader and for the Asian client, we construct a similar yet distinct profile. Definitions and examples follow to demonstrate the complex interactions.

First, *parallel* relationships occur when a White counselor and an Asian client share similar developmental stages regarding interethnic issues. For example, when a White counselor of the first stage -- Preexposure -- encounters an Asian client of the first stage -- Precontact, a parallel interaction is generated; both are ignorant of the racial differences. Another parallel interaction arises when a White counselor of the third stage -- ProMinority -- interacts with an Asian client of the third stage -- Immersion, with the counselor's paternalistic racial attitude correlates with the client's positive attitude toward his/her own ethnic group. Yet another parallel interaction occurs when the third stage ProWhite leader encounters a third-stage Conformity Asian. These parallel interactions at best produce harmonious relationships and, at worst, inertia and impasse. Neither leader nor member can stimulate each other to move beyond their current world views, though the client may feel supported.

Secondly, *regressive* relationships befall when a counselor's racial identity development is at least a stage less advanced than that of a client. For example, when a White counselor of the first stage -- Preexposure -- interacts with an Asian client of the third stage -- Immersion/Marginality -- or of a more advanced developmental stage, regressive interactions ensue. Characteristics of this relationship are anxiety and conflicts, overt or covert. The counselor is likely to feel threatened by a racial perspective that he/she does not believe and attempt to influence a client into accepting the counselor's world view. The client, on the other hand, will resist and try to make the counselor perceive the world beyond that less sophisticated perspective. This conflict-filled tension may result in Asian clients' early termination or superficial interaction.

Thirdly, *progressive* relationships ensue when a counselor's racial identity stage is at least one stage more developmentally advanced than a client's. A leader of the fourth stage -- Redefinition -- and a client of the third stage -- Conformity -- are examples of progressive interactions. The growth-movement characterizes this interaction although sometimes accompanied with tension.. If the leader is culturally skillful in showing the benefit of advancement, the client is likely to move to advanced racial identity stages.

Finally, *crossed* relationships, the most conflicted relationship, result when the world view of a counselor stands in sharp contrast to that of a client. The clash can occur when a counselor of the third stage -- ProWhite -- encounters an Asian client of the opposite third stage -- Immersion. This interaction tends to be antagonistic, producing considerable hostility on both sides. Consequently, this interaction is least likely to promote an ethnic member's growth.

Group Stage Development

The last factor in our conceptual framework involves a group's developmental stages. Literature indicates that group process is not static, but dynamic and developmental with discrete stages, each having its own particular tasks and challenges (Corey & Corey, 1992; Gladding, 1995). Given this dynamic group development, the intervention strategies in group counseling should carefully respond to the unique tasks and challenges characterized in each stage.

Stage-Specific Interactive Model

The compounding effects among the four variables, i.e., Asian clients' ethnic identity, a group leader's White racial identity, the interactive patterns in cross-cultural encounters, and group stages, all make the group work an enormously complex task (Helms, 1990). Each interethnic interaction with its specific dynamics and issues requires unique considerations. To meet this requirement, our model adopts Anderson's "style-shift counseling" paradigm (Cited in Ivey & Goncalves, 1988). Style-shift counseling meets a client's developmental needs and promotes growth within and across the client's developmental levels.

In this model, we exclude Asians in the Precontact stage who are likely to be immigrants speaking English as their second language (Sue, 1994) and who are more likely to prefer ethnically-matched leaders due to language barriers (Atkinson et al., 1993; Sue, 1994; Sue & Sue, 1990). Furthermore, culturally homogeneous groups would suit Asian clients of the Precontact stage, as they can communicate better and feel supported by those with common experiences and needs (Fukuyama & Coleman, 1992; Sue, 1990; Vasquez & Han, 1995; Yu & Gregg, 1993). As a practical matter, we focus mainly on issues inherent in the forming and transition stages for they frequently evoke excessive anxiety in Asian members (Leong, 1992). In addition, our model addresses crossed and regressive interaction patterns as these are most

harmful to a group's development (Greeley et al., 1992).

Forming Stage

Issues important during the forming stage of group work with Asians are the extent of risk-taking in self-disclosure, expression of feelings, expectation of leadership, tolerance of ambiguity, and handling of different communication styles. Like any other new group members in the forming stage, Asians tend to avoid revealing personal matters for fear of being rejected or misinterpreted (Aizenman & Watson, 1991). With this fear in mind, a leader must make an effort to explain the general group process (Saidla, 1990) and convey respect for the Asian members' boundaries regarding self-disclosing behaviors (Brinson & Lee, 1996). The group counselor can assure Asian members of their rights in determining the extent and the pace of self-disclosure (Chen, 1995; Yu & Gregg, 1993). The leader's honest sharing about his/her awareness of cultural and racial matters can serve as a good model for clients (Brinson & Lee, 1996; Chen, 1995; Sue, 1990).

Due to the belief that displaying strong feelings is a sign of immaturity, Asian members tend to be reluctant to reveal emotions in public (Chen, 1995; Leong, 1992; Moy, 1992; Yu & Gregg, 1993). If the interaction is *crossed (*ProWhite leader vs. Immersion Asian client), or *regressive (*Disintegration vs. Immersion), the group leader may err by requesting Asian members to reveal deep personal emotions (Chen, 1995; Yu & Gregg, 1993). In both cases, the White counselors in less sophisticated identity stages would see Asian members as agents of their psychological problems, evoking excessive shame in Asian clients. The resulting intense anxiety would force Asian members to cling to stereotypical thinking or drop-out (Leong, 1992; McRae, 1994). To avoid this situation, a group leader must provide an empathic and culturally

responsive group environment, especially in the forming and transition stages (Brinson & Lee, 1996; Leong, 1992; Vasquez & Han, 1995).

A culturally responsive group environment is possible when group leaders attend to several traditional Asian values. Asian members in less advanced identity stages usually expect a counselor to be an expert or a confident problem solver (Chen, 1995; Itai & McRae, 1994; Moy, 1992; Saidla, 1990; Sue & Sue, 1990). To them, an egalitarian relationship would imply a lack of expertise (Leong, 1992; Saidla, 1992). Thus, a group leader taking a more directive approach would gain the trust of Asians at the initial group phase (Chen, 1995; Moy, 1992). Further, Asians, particularly those in the less developed stages, prefer a group with structure and clearly defined tasks, such as challenging racism, over one that is ambiguous or reflective (Brinson & Lee, 1996; Moy, 1992; Sue & Sue, 1990). To be directive, active, and influential, group leaders need to be more revealing and personal (Sue, 1990). Using a culture-blind and non-directive approach would be rated by Asian members as less credible or approachable (Gim, Atkinson, & Kim, 1991; Leong, 1992).

If a White leader is in the Preexposure stage, he/she may be naive about the relationship between racial characteristics and the preference for group structure. Failing to provide clear structure (Carter, 1990a) will allow ambiguity to create anxiety for these Asians. Therefore, group leaders in Preexposure, or even in Disintegration and ProWhite stages, need to monitor their own stereotypes, extending their knowledge about other cultures and client-specific intervention skills (Sabnani et al., 1991). If, however, the interaction is *Regressive*, such as a White leader of the Disintegrated (2nd) stage with Asian members of the Integrated (5th) stage, the preference is reversed, with the Asian preferring a more open and process-oriented group and

the Disintegrated leader preferring a structured group.

Another area that easily generates cultural conflict is nonverbal communication. Nonverbal communication is more culturally bound for meaning than is verbal communication. It can easily elicit confusion and irritation, leading to ethnic stereotypes (Herring, 1990; Reyes, & Celano, 1993). Occurring frequently in the forming stage, silence tends to be viewed as a form of resistance from an Eurocentric counseling perspective. Like avoidance of direct eye contact, however, silence is the customary sign of respect for elders and authority figures in traditional Asian cultures (Itai & McRae, 1994). Talking too much, interrupting others, or direct eye contact, conversely, is regarded as impolite (Itai & McRae, 1994; Sue & Sue, 1990). Asian members sometimes remain silent to avoid disagreeing with the collectivistic interests, or to take a low profile in keeping with their humility (Chen, 1995). In these cases, silence does not necessarily mean a signal of inviting others to take over the conversation (Itai & McRae, 1994). Therefore, group leaders need to ascertain the correct interpretation of unfamiliar nonverbal messages, especially with Asians in the early ethnic identity developmental stages (Brinson & Lee, 1996).

Transition Stage.

The forming and transition stages are the most difficult stages where cultural conflicts, if not addressed, may usher in clients' premature termination (Leong, 1992). In the transition stage, issues center on working through conflict management, confrontation, challenge to leadership, and resistance. Asians are often considered the least receptive and responsive to group work (Leong, 1992) for their cultures encourage verbal non-assertiveness and restraint of strong emotions; conversely, traditional group goals emphasize verbal expression of feelings, autonomy,

and confrontation as a means of conflict resolution. When properly handled, these value conflicts can be resolved. Asian group members may, as a result, move toward more profound group tasks and toward more sophisticated ethnic identity development.

If not addressed properly, these cultural conflicts may lead Asians, especially those in their earlier ethnic identity stages, to retreat into withdrawal, silence, intellectualization, or anger displacement (Yu & Gregg, 1993) which in turn results in negative group experiences or early termination. For example, if the interaction is *regressive*, such as a Preexposure leader vs. Immersion Asian members, the leader may assume that the Asians are incompetent in confrontation, not recognizing that their cultural values proscribe it. The Immersion Asian clients, however, easily recognize bias. If the interaction is another *regressive* one, such as the Preexposure leader vs. Marginality Asians, the Asian members will avoid cultural issues intentionally in order not to be caught between the conflicting cultures, and the leader may incorrectly attribute Asian members' avoidance to personal problems.

Yalom (1995) insists that the key to a successful group lies in controlling the intensity of conflict. Excessive prohibition of conflict can result in superficiality, whereas excessive expression of conflict can result in alienation. A group leader, therefore, must be aware of how cultural factors influence clients' tolerance for conflicts and actively create a conductive group environment that acknowledges that. A direct but less confrontational approach accompanied by a leader's honest and caring communication could help resolve these conflicts (Greeley et al., 1992; Leong, 1992; Merta, 1995; Saidla, 1990). It is both the White leader's and Asian group members' task to gain awareness of their own ethnic/racial identity development and cultural orientation, and the leader must differentiate his/her own conflicts from the group members'

conflicts (Greeley et al., 1992).

Other ethnic members usually label Asians as indirect, evasive, and fearful of confrontation (Itai & McRae, 1994; Sue & Sue, 1990). Asians' view of confrontation is closely related to their conflict management (Chen, 1995; Moy, 1992; Leong, 1992; Yu & Gregg; 1993). The following cultural characteristics especially deserve attention. First, Asian culture strongly encourages an individual to submit his/her right to the collective interest. Conformity and self-repression are social norms, while overt displays of individualism are considered aggressive. Since Asians highly value humility, individuals may use self-denial to accommodate others and receive, in return, enduring social support. Second, as people in a collectivism culture, Asians orient themselves toward vertical relationships, comfortably accepting power differences and strongly discouraging competitions. Third, fear of being criticized can prevent Asians from confronting others in a spontaneous and direct manner. Therefore, euphemisms, such as smiling and laughing, may be used to cope with uncomfortable feelings, allowing all parties to "maintain faces".

Based on these traditional cultural characteristics, Asians in earlier identity phases tend to see confrontation as a negative behavior and avoid at all cost the giving and receiving of confrontative feedback (Leong, 1992). While they can generously give positive feedback to others, they discount positive feedback given to them. Group leaders need to demonstrate the purpose of confrontation and to show how to confront in constructive ways. Failing to do so, in *parallel* interaction (Disintegration vs. Dissonance) and *regressive* interaction (Preexposure vs. Marginality, or Disintegration vs. Immersion), group leaders may solicit spontaneous confrontation from Asians, making them feel uncomfortable. When unwilling to confront others,

these Asians may be labeled as evasive and fearful. Labeling is less helpful (Corey & Corey, 1992) than teaching how to add empathy to confrontation, a combination that works better for Asian members (Greeley et al., 1992; Leong, 1992).

The power struggle becomes ostensible in the *crossed* relationship where a Whiteness salient leader in the ProWhite stage interacts with Asian members who, in their Immersion stage, distrust the leader (Helms, 1990; Sue & Sue, 1990). Asian members will suspect the leader's racism and ask the leader to disclose his/her cultural attitudes. As a result, both of them may feel powerless to cultivate the "we-feeling". The sense of we-ness, also called group cohesion, occurs when a leader creates a group environment that promotes openness, trust, and caring (Gladding, 1995) so that group members are willing to let others know them in a meaningful way (Corey & Corey, 1992).

Cohesion, however, can sometimes be problematic when pseudo-acceptance prevails and harmony is emphasized over everything else (Gladding, 1995). This scenario may lead Asians in the earlier ethnic identity levels to repress themselves for the sake of a harmonious relationship. Pseudo-cohesion can be apparent in the *parallel* interactions (Preexposure vs. Conformity, & ProMinority vs. Immersion) as neither the group leader nor the Asian members want to break the harmonious atmosphere. Only the *progressive* interactions (Autonomy vs. Dissonance; Autonomy vs. Conformity; or Autonomy vs. Marginality) hold promise for promoting members' growth. The White leaders in the Autonomy stage tend to encourage multiculturalism, helping Asian members become relativistic in their world view (Helms, 1990).

Working Stage.

The group members' commitment to achieving personal tasks features the working stage.

After working through the transition stage, group members are now more likely to demonstrate increased self-disclosure, candid feedback, and conversion of insight into action. Following the intense contacts with others from different cultures, both the leader and Asian members progress to higher levels of identity maturity, rendering culturally encapsulated parties (Wrenn, 1962) more aware of their ethnocentric assumptions and limiting beliefs. The interventions in the working stage thus focus on encouraging deepened self-disclosure, increased willingness to give and receive honest feedback, and commitment to change. If, however, the cultural conflicts have not been resolved, an Asian member may have difficulty in practicing deepened disclosure as in the ProWhite vs. Marginality *parallel* interaction, or ProWhite vs. Immersion *crossed* interaction. Similarly, in a *regressive* (ProWhite vs. Integration) or a *parallel* interaction (Disintegration vs. Dissonance), the White leader's identity confusion or racial superiority does not allow support toward the Asian members' exploration of personal challenges (Vasquez & Han, 1995).

One important task in the working stage is to establish a belief that change is possible. The belief in power of change is increased when a group leader emphasize Asian members' strengths rather than pathology, helping them examine how their cultural values influence their personal issues and how the same cultural dynamics contribute to their resilient and optimal mental health (Brinson & Lee, 1996; Vasquez & Han, 1995). In *parallel* (ProWhite vs. Marginality) or in *regressive* interaction (ProWhite vs. Integration), however, the ProWhite counselor may view Asian participants' psychological problems as personal problems, neglecting the impact of cultural value conflicts. In the *crossed* (ProWhite vs. Immersion) interaction, the Immersion Asian member may consider societal oppression as the cause of his/her psychological

problems and show direct anger toward the White counselor. In any case, group leaders need to be aware of group members' exasperation and to encourage them to move from the present stage toward empowering their choices to control their lives (Brinson & Lee, 1996).

Termination Stage.

The termination stage in the group life can still bring challenges to both a leader and members. In this stage, cross-cultural interventions need to focus on how to handle unfinished business and separation anxiety, transferring group experiences into daily life. By the termination stage, most of the culturally different value issues are expected to have resolved if the group has allowed itself to work through those issues throughout the forming, transition, and working stages. If the group has unfortunately not resolved these issues, unfinished business is likely to arise. For example, in the *regressive* (ProWhite vs. Integration) interaction, the Asian will have unsettled feelings that the group leader, who is locked in Whiteness, has not understood him/ her. Also, in the *crossed* (ProWhite vs. Immersion) interaction, a relationship characterized by combat and conflict, numerous regrets may exist. In this situation, the group leader needs to provide Asian members a chance to express any unfinished matters. Acknowledging the existence of unresolved issues will help Asians consider seeking another group experience when in need of assistance (Corey & Corey, 1992). Another important task in the termination stage is for the leader to ascertain that Asian members have social systems that support their newly acquired behaviors (Moy, 1992), as some new behaviors may not be culturally-syntonic (Fukuyama & Coleman, 1992; Moy, 1992).

Discussion

This article provides a model for intervening problems encountered throughout the cross-

cultural group with Asian members. We hope that these thoughts offer leaders culturally responsive intervention, enhancing their cross-cultural sensitivity and competence, which in turn motivate Asians to seek, utilize, and benefit from group experience.

Implications for Assessment

For a cross-cultural group to be successful, one needs to consider how the different ethnic identity composition impacts the group process. Based on Yalom's (1995) theory, a racially heterogeneous group can benefit both parties in increased multicultural awareness, reduced racial prejudice, and enriched feedback (Corey & Corey, 1992; Merta, 1995). The heterogeneous group, however, often produces enormous tension when exploring racial issues (McRae, 1994; Yu & Gregg, 1993). Conversely, a racially homogeneous group shares similar values, is cohesive, and allows thorough exploration of problems (Corey & Corey, 1992; Yu & Gregg, 1993). The homogeneous group, however, risks being superficial, less creative, or less productive (Yu & Gregg, 1993). Giving consideration to the pros and cons, group workers need to carefully place individuals into a group that is appropriate for their development (Brinson & Lee, 1996). For the purpose of placement, assessing the ethnic identity development of Asians is crucial. Several scales, such as S. Lee's Asian American Cultural Identity scale, and F. Lee's Asian American Ethnic Identity scale (Cited in Kohatsu et al., 1991), are available for assessment, though most are not empirically tested (Uba, 1994).

Implications for Clinical Training

The status of a leader's racial identity development reflects his/her level of confidence in establishing a working alliance with clients (Ottavi et al., 1994). Higher levels of racial identity development correspond to higher levels of multicultural counseling competencies (Helms,

1995; Sabnani et al., 1991; Steward, Boatwright, Sauer, Baden, & Jackson, 1995). Given this, counselor training programs need to help trainees develop a more advanced White racial identity (Sabnani et al., 1992). Trainees must be encouraged to view racial attitudes as a process over which they have influence (Sabnani et al., 1991). Moreover, self knowledge about their own developmental process of racial identity can help student counselors confront their defenses of racial issues (Ottavi et al., 1994).

Counselor educators can facilitate trainees' racial identity development in may ways. Exposing students to culturally diverse professors, peers, and curriculum (Ponterotto, 1993), or to internship sites with culturally heterogeneous clients (Yutrzenka, 1995), are possibilities. Counselor educators can also utilize the fishbowl technique, in which a multicultural group and a group of process observers are utilized to develop trainees' racial awareness (Merta, 1995). In addition, simulated counseling sessions concerning racial issues helps develop trainees' racial sensitivity (Greeley et al., 1992; Helms, 1990). Ideally, a cross-cultural group leader needs to develop his/her racial identity at least up to the Redefinition or Integration stage where he/she is more likely to embrace multiculturalism, to validate a minority's bicultural difficulties in American society, and to avoid stereotypical thinking and biases (Fukuyama & Coleman, 1992; Moy, 1992; Steward et al., 1995).

Limitations and Suggestions

We are aware of several limitations in our models. First, this model is based on conceptual and experiential rather than operational terms. This lack of empirical data can be attributed to an infancy stage of understanding and testing ethnic/racial identity development (Sabnani et al., 1991). Second, to simplify the complexity of the model, we assume a somewhat

stable identity development. We, however, prefer to view identity development as dynamics that change over time and context. Third, this model lacks the cognitive development aspects of therapist and clients. Research indicates that ethnic/racial identity attitudes are significantly influenced by the complexity of cognitive schemas of counselors and clients. The higher the cognitive complexity, the better a counselor or a client can avoid stereotyping and accept multiculturalism (Steward et al., 1995). Finally, Carter (1990b) found significant effects of gender during interracial contacts: Women reported greater comfort with racial interactions than did men. Yet, our model does not incorporate the gender effects over ethnic/racial identity development and group process.

Despite the above limitations, this cross-cultural framework can be utilized in any environment involving cross-cultural interactions, such as the bi-racial family, school, workplace, or supervisory relationship. Educators of group specialists may use this model as a framework for cross-cultural group counseling training. Future studies should include empirical designs to investigate the effects of the model.

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